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A PROGRAM OF FAMILY WORSHIP

By

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A PROGRAM OF FAMILY WORSHIP

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A PROGRAM OF FAMILY WORSHIP

PART I

THE HOME

A PROGRAM OF FAMILY WORSHIP

PART I

THE HOME

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HOME

The present widespread criticism of the home is significant because it shows that thinking men and women are realizing the importance of the home and are trying to analyze its problems to find how it can best adjust itself to a rapidly changing world, and still retain those elements which make it "the mightiest of all educational instruments."(1)

The family is far more important than the home, which is merely its shell and is constantly changing. As Dr. Cope says, "Our concern for the future should not be whether we can pass on intact the forms of home organization, but whether we can give to the next day the force of ideal family life." (2) The family is here to stay, though modified by social pressure. "The roots of the family strike so deep into the underlying strata of social history and social organization that to uproot it would mean the uprooting and destruction of every other recognized social institution. Capitalism or socialism or anarchism or any other phase of social experiment may have power to harm temporarily but not to destroy the domestic institution. The outlook is for a world that still expects and needs family life as the normal portion of the great majority of the people. ...The family

(1) Wilm, E.C.: The Culture of Religion, p. 39
(2) Cope, H.F.: Religious Education in the Family, p. 24

will be expected to remain the training ground for those wider loyalties and efficiencies without which real democracy is impossible." (1)

"Without an effective controlling home influence in each unit of society, general disaster must come." (2)

The family has developed naturally and is a biological and social necessity, not a superficial organization imposed upon society somehow from without. It satisfies our cravings for intimate affection and understanding as nothing else can, and therefore its future is as secure as human nature itself. (3)

In the past the home had almost a monopoly on certain social experiences which have now been taken from it and the problem is to find what its real place is in the new social order and how it can best fill that place. New home conditions present new problems and require new methods. It is no longer a question of how much does the home do for the child, but how well does it do its work. "There is no necessary relation between the affection of the family and the quantity of cooking done in its own kitchen." (4)

The new increase of leisure which science has made possible in the modern home should make it possible for

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(1) Todd, A. J.: The Family, July, 1922
(2) Clark, E.: The Rearing of Children Becoming a Science, N. Y. Times, Nov. 1, 1925.
(3) See Groves, E.R.: The Drifting Home, Ch. 4
(4) ibid., p. 88

# indicates references from Y.W.C.A. material mentioned in the bibliography.

parents to study and broaden their horizons so that they may become more efficient parents, for the home depends upon the parents. "Higher standards of family life we must have, for even civilization cannot be secure if too many homes get adrift." (1)

Special Advantages

"The home is and always will be the final determining influence upon the characters of children," (2), for the first years are still in the home, and there foundations are laid and habits are formed through early training and constant contacts with parents and others which very largely determine later attitudes and ideals. Psychoanalysis and psychiatry have discovered the importance of the first few years in shaping the emotional life of the child. "The marring of the emotional and volitional life in those tender years may lead to serious mental conflicts, impulsions, obsessions and delinquency at adolescence or later. ....Morally the family is the cradle of our basic social ideals and the most formative force in the development of conscience and character. ....Religiously the influence of the home is all pervasive." (3)

Religious impressions are unconsciously received and responses are made which gradually develop into attitudes of love, unselfishness, and thoughtfulness of others. The little child is helpless to control the impressions which he receives and accepts them all. He has no moral sense and

(1)Groves,E.R.:The Drifting Home, p.11
(2)Stagg,M.W. and S.B.:Home Lessons in Religion,vol.ii,p.14
(3)Frank,R.W.:The Trend in American Family Life, Religious Education, Dec. 1923, pp. 332-334.

everything he does is simply a new experience, with no association of right or wrong. He imitates everything, and imagination plays a big part in making things real to him. His questions must be answered truthfully and consistently, for they form the basis for his understanding of life. What he learns in the home of "awe, reverence, humility, a sense of law and of justice in punishment for breaking that law"(1) becomes the foundation for his religious interpretation of life.

Through his own experience with his parents he learns what it means to seek the approval of the Father in heaven, and thus, gradually, almost unconsciously, the child forms many of his religious concepts long before he is old enough to be sent to Sunday school.

The home does not cease to be of great importance as the child grows, for in it he must put into practice those things which he is constantly learning. It is in the home that he learns first to live as a religious person.

In addition to providing opportunity for such experience in creating a whole-hearted religious atmosphere the family must recognize its obligation to go further, and consciously aid the developing religious life of its members by establishing some form of systematic religious training. This may take the form of a period of family worship.

Increasing Interest in the Home and Its Problems.

There has been widespread criticism of the home in the past few years, and parents have been severely, and often

(1) Langford, F.W.: First Steps Towards Character, American Home Series, p. 18

very justly criticized for their failures. In spite of prophecies of its doom, however, the family persists, and it "is still monogamic, increasingly democratic in its adjustments and working ideals, giving even higher evaluation to childhood and motherhood, being modified for the most part in wholesome and ethically progressive directions." (1)

The growing interest in child training--especially of the pre-school child--the increasing demand for literature dealing with problems which parents must meet, the awakening of churches to the need for closer co-operation with the home through parents' classes, etc., the extension of justice to the family and its members through legislation--all of these are signs that more and more we are coming to realize the significance of the family and its function in society. Never before have there been so many trained people working for the improvement and enrichment of childhood and family life, and only a beginning has been made.

"The awakening of parents to the consciousness of the functions of the family has been especially characteristic of the past decade, and it is the largest single element of promise in the present situation." (2)

PROBLEMS WHICH CONFRONT THE HOME TO-DAY

That something is wrong with marriage is shown by "the number of celibates, of mismated couples, of divorces,

(1) Frank, R.W.: The Trend in American Family Life, Religious Education, Dec. 1923. p.331
(2) ibid, p. 331

of childless homes, of wife deserters, of mental and nervous wrecks;--the frequency of marital discord, of prostitution and adultery, of perversions, of juvenile delinquency tells the story." (1) "Anything that affects health, disease, and housing, birth, marriage or death, the work of women or the education of children, the distribution of wealth and property, the drift from country to city, the standards of living in different social groups and classes, the political status of women and their place in industry, the stability of manners and morals is bound to affect family life." (2) Many of these problems are so new the family is bewildered and knows not how to meet them. Here it will not be possible to do more than mention some of the more outstanding features of particular problems, hoping that more insight into their solution will come with added experience and wisdom. The first step has been taken when the difficulty has been recognized.

Lack of Parental Education.

Educated people do not necessarily make educated parents, and while there are some exceptions, of course, in general it is true that "parents have refused to be educated. Entrusted with the task of rearing, sheltering, nourishing and guiding the most complex organism that life has produced, they insist on relying upon tradition, whims, prejudices, and obsolete religious sanctions." (3) Very often, too, parents

(1) Popenoe: Modern Marriage, p. 6, preface.
(2) Tufts, J.H.: Wartime Gains for the American Family
(3) Van Waters, M.: New Republic, Feb. 4, 1925

have refused to grow up emotionally and to develop discipline, self-control, judgment, responsibility and justice, and the results of their failure have reflected upon their children, often with tragic results. The little child is far more deeply influenced by what his parents are than by what they say. "Young people must recognize bringing up children as the most fascinating occupation in the world for an intelligent person and one which demands a skill, insight and scientific training second to none." (1) The quantity of parental responsibility to-day is less than it used to be but the quality must be much higher. "There is a science of home-direction and an art of family living; both must be learned with patient study." (2) The cost of a real home is heavy but "the reward is finer minds, bigger hearts, happier natures, richer personalities, greater characters." (3) "The teaching of parents must get down to bed-rock motives and apply the leverage of affection, moral obligation and religious inspiration. Parents need more incentive as well as greater insight." (4)

Not only are parents ignorant of many things which parents should know, but a large proportion of them are indifferent to the finer things of life, and care little

#(1) Woolley,H.T.:Why Do Parents Need Special Training?" Child Study, Oct., 1925
(2) Cope,H.F.: Religious Education in the Family, p. 7
#(3) Allinson: Freedom and Family Life
(4) Groves, E.R.:The Drifting Home, p. 14

for what the church and allied institutions are doing to make the world a better place for their children to live in. "Two-thirds of all American children receive no significant religious instruction" (1), and there are 7,414,240 nominally Protestant children under ten years of age who are growing up in non-church homes without grace at table, family prayers, or any connections with church or Sunday school. (2) Dr. Newmann says "The gravest problem for school, home and community to-day is not raised by the relatively small number of criminals. It is raised by the moral unenlightenment of the much larger number of quite respectable persons." (3) The inefficiency of the modern home is due not only to lack of contact between parents and their children, but to their failure to have anything vital to give them. Knowledge of the Bible is not enough. They must have a religion which concerns all of life,--industry, politics, science, recreation, etc., if it is ever to produce a Christ-like society.

The Industrial Revolution and Its Results

Many of the problems which are facing the American family today can be traced directly or indirectly to the industrial revolution of the past century.

Transfer of Industry from Home to Factory. The greatest change which has occurred is in the relation of the family to production. Professor Ross says that "four-fifths

(1) Betts, G.H.: The New Program of Religious Education
(2) See International Journal of Rel. Ed., Aug. 1926, p. 59
(3) Newmann, H: Ed. for Moral Growth, p. 3

of the industrial processes carried on in the average American home in 1850 have departed never to return." Meat, clothes, candles, soap, shoes, etc., are now made almost entirely by specialists, and as a result men, women, and children have been taken from their homes to work in factories, with the consequences which we shall see. In some families almost no home life is possible under the conditions which are created. When the family is together it is usually only for a few hours, and those are mostly spent in sleeping. The father is away all day and has no time or is too tired to get acquainted with his children when he is home, and as a result discipline and co-operation are very hard to secure.

The poorer family has had to sacrifice privacy and comfort by living in crowded tenements and apartments, where no real family life is possible. The fear of unemployment is a constant menace. We must make laws which will protect the family and insure it leisure for developing the higher values of life.

Increase of Leisure. In the fairly economically independent homes the effect of the transfer of industry from the home to the factory upon women has been greater in some ways for it has given them more opportunity for leisure, and many have sought outside activities and interests, instead of staying at home. The automobile and the rise in the cost of "help" made big houses less desirable, and the apartment sprang into popularity. The club, hotel, movie,

automobile, etc., are fast becoming the centers of social life in place of the home. The state takes over the education and play of the children earlier than it used to and the mother has more opportunity to develop her individuality and to broaden her interests so that she may follow them outside of the home.

Education of Women. The greater opportunities for education for women have made them demand a place with men in the world's work and as a consequence new problems have arisen which are far-reaching in their scope. "No such upheaval as this can possibly take place without doubt, experiment, overemphasis, false leads, and periods of consternation." (1) Divorce, the lowered birth-rate among the higher classes, the increasing number of "companionates", or voluntarily childless marriages, etc., etc., are among the problems which are making serious-minded people stop and think at present.

Change from Autocratic to Democratic Family. One of the most outstanding features has been the change in the form of the family from the patriarchal or autocratic to the democratic type. Authority is becoming reasonable rather than arbitrary, and this is a hopeful sign, for we are coming to realize that no authority except that of inner control can possibly protect youth in these days of manifold temptations and uncertain standards.

(1) Miller. H.A.: Changes in the Social Order Affecting the Life of the Home." Rel. Ed. Dec. 1923, p. 347

Trend toward City Life. The city type of family is increasing rapidly. In 1900 only 29.5% of our population lived in cities of 2,500 or over. In 1920 52% lived in cities of 2,500 or over, and 36% in cities of 25,000 or over.(1) The better economic advantages and increased means of locomotion have led young people to leave the rural communities to seek jobs in the city. City life where there is no community or religious life because groups are largely transitory makes standards hard to maintain, for "no one knows". There are many counter-attractions to compete with the home and it is very difficult to maintain a real family unity.

Recreation. Recreation scatters the family and is often unreal and unnatural. Life is hurried and confused. Since science has banished fear of the weather, home is no longer the most attractive place. The family spends its evenings at the movies, instead of around the fireplace. The moving picture is "one of the greatest social assets in American life, ...adapted fundamentally for families, ...but we have allowed it to develop along commercial lines." (2) The seating capacity of movie theaters in the United States is over thirteen millions, and the average daily attendance is twenty millions. Such an institution presents many real social and moral problems, but it may be a powerful force for good. Commercialized recreation must be directed into constructive instead of destructive channels.

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1) See Weigle, H.A.: The Training of Children in the Christian Family, Ch. 2.
(2) Frank, R.W.: The Trend in American Family Life. p. 342

The radio enlarges the recreational facilities of the now almost sterile home. "To possess a radio is the only thing that keeps a modern child in nights, and then he is vastly discontented if the performance is limited to his home city. If he is in Los Angeles he wants Chicago--if he is in Chicago he wants Hollywood," (1), so Dr. Van Waters says.

"The application of so-called 'modern conveniences' to everything has made the home a little dull. Children should deal with the elemental things of the world: earth, stones, trees, animals, running water, fire, open spaces instead of pavements, signboards, subdivided lots, apartment houses, and electric percolators. Civilization has been hardest on children." (2) Not only does city life deprive the child of his natural right to play and run out-of-doors, but he cannot develop normally in a small apartment--where he was not wanted by the landlord in the first place, probably. He is nagged and bossed and has nothing to do and does it by the clock.

Materialism. Materialism has developed faster than man's control or sense of values, and the desire for luxuries has been spread by the moving picture, etc., so that all too truly the home has become "a name for the place where we put things that we buy," as the child has said. Money has acquired an undue importance.

Functions of the Home taken over by Specialists. The application of modern science to the work of the home, and

#(1) Van Waters, M: What's Wrong with the Home? New Re. Feb.4,1923
#(2) ibid.

the tendency of parents to shift responsibility to the school, church, and state have resulted in a loss of family unity which thoughtful parents are realizing is a very real danger to those values which family life at its best seeks to conserve. Many of the things which the family used to do for the child are given over to specialists who are far better able to do them, and herein lies also the opportunity of the home, for it makes it possible for parents to concentrate on "the more important responsibilities no other institution can perform--direction, stimulation, and loving friendship." (1) Dr. Groves puts it this way: "The family will be the great interpreter rather than the minister of resources."(2) It will seek to unify experiences and help the child to see their value by directing choices and stimulating interest and desire to learn. Thus it will concentrate on doing the important things which institutions cannot do, giving also fellowship and love. When the cooking, sewing, health, etc., are taken care of by specialists the mother is not too tired to give the child her best. This should make possible a higher type of family life than ever before.

The conscientious family must scrutinize the agencies which seek to minister to the child and find their defects which must be corrected or supplied by the home. Thus the school, church, industry, legislation, etc., will be made to supplement and aid the home instead of supplanting it.

#(1) Clark, E.: The Rearing of Children Becoming a Science, N. Y. Times, Nov. 1, 1925
(2) Groves, E.R.: The Drifting Home, p. 41

THE CHALLENGE TO THE CHRISTIAN HOME

"Jesus came to regard the sacred relation of the family as mirroring the rightful relation between God and man. ... By consecrating marriage, by emancipating womanhood, by sanctifying childhood, by expanding brotherhood, and making the domestic group the type of the Divine social order which is to be he created what may distinctively be called the Christian family. ...It enfolds in itself the promise and potency of all social progress and pure human happiness. ... it exists for ends beyond itself; it is the preparation and equipment of personalities for the service of God and man." (1)

Probably there does not exist an ideal Christian family, but there are some that are conscientiously striving to realize the ideal which Jesus set before us, and in these families lies the hope of the future. We have seen some of the difficulties which confront the home and we know that it is no easy task to maintain a vital home life in this day and age, and yet it is clear that "a thoroughly Christian home is the necessary preparation for and precursor to a Christian social order." (2) It has been said that "the Christian home with its climate and instruction, its guidance, its inspiration and its memories has been the greatest single factor in Christianizing the world." (3) The church's program is fruitless without the co-operation of the home.

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(1) Strahan, James: art. Biblical and Christian Family, Encyc. of Rel. and Ethics, vol. 5, pp. 726-727
(2) Frank,R.W.: The Trend in American Family Life, Rel.Ed.Dec,1925
(3) Ritchie,D.L.: Home Training in Religion,Rel.Ed.Apr.1924,p.85

Neither can get along without the other. "As go our homes, so will go the church and the nation and every institution, enterprise, and interest of our whole life. The home can never safely make the church the stepmother of its children."(1)

The Christian family must face the facts and realize that its contribution to the coming of the Kingdom of God will cost much in time, energy, thought, study, and devotion. Only those who are intensely in earnest will be willing to pay the price. Dr. Coe has said, "Family religion will not undergo any significant revival upon the basis of our present religious conventionality, but only when parents begin to take a questioning attitude towards that which now they take for granted. When religion means the spiritualizing of all our contacts with the things that modern science and industry put within our reach; when it means that all our human contacts in the industrial order are devoted to the making of men who shall be like Jesus; when fathers and mothers frankly accept as part of their Christian experience all the questioning, the protest, the struggle, and the self-mastery that this implies, then, indeed, the Christian home will acquire immense educational efficiency."(2)

Those families that are in earnest in striving to realize this high ideal will seek first to make the atmosphere of the home one in which there is every opportunity to live the fullest, richest Christian life, with the least possible

(1) Harper,W.A.:An Integrated Program of Religious Education,p.138
#(2) Coe, G.A.: What Ails the Parents? The Congregationalist, June 18, 1925

hindrance, and in addition will seek to give definite religious instruction that will help in the formation of christian attitudes and ideals which will function in conduct. The suggestions in the second half of this paper, it is hoped, may be of value in establishing and carrying on some such program.

PART II

WORSHIP IN THE HOME

PART II

WORSHIP IN THE HOME

THE NEED AND VALUE OF TRUE WORSHIP

The Atmosphere of the Home

More valuable than any formal program can possibly be in building Christian character is the atmosphere of the home in which the child lives. In many homes where no definite religious instruction is given children grow up with high ideals which they have unconsciously acquired from the example of their parents' lives,--for after all, "actions speak louder than words," and a home may have a regular form of worship and still be unChristian. "Some go through the forms of worship regularly, without experiencing its fruits. Others practice it as a kind of charm, a bit of pious magic, with mistaken notions and false aims." (1) Precept and example must harmonize. Adult religious observances will not make the child religious, but "the home where the religious spirit, the spirit of idealism, and the sense of the infinite and divine are diffused rather than injected" (2) will surely have a great influence in his religious development. The atmosphere and customs of the family, the mental habits of the parents, and everything they do and say are vastly important, for to the little child his parents are all-wise. The world is new and mysterious

(1) Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, p. 347
(2) Cope, H.F.: Religious Education in the Family, p. 6

and everything they do is right. The child is influenced through sympathy, suggestion, and imitation. Therefore, religion must not be a thing set apart, but normal living,--pervading all conversation and conduct, and through the lives of those about him the child will come to know the meaning of the love of God. "The most potent influence for good that the world knows is a whole-minded Christian home. In such a home the Kingdom of God begins to come on earth--that Kingdom which will come fully when all men realize that they have one Father and are brethern." (1) In such a home the child is learning to live with others in true democracy(2) and is learning the meaning of loyalty, love, and sacrifice, and putting the highest value on things spiritual.

The family has always been the most important religious institution, even among primitive peoples, and has become more important as the higher type of family developed. In the Hebrew family special emphasis was laid upon the religious instruction of the children, and motherhood and family life were elevated by the Messianic hope which the race cherished. The Christian family has developed from the ideals given by Jesus. "He glorifies the relations of the family by making them the figure by which men may understand the highest relations of life. ...Christianity makes a religious purpose the very reason for the existence of the Christian type of home. It makes our homes essentially religious institutions, to be judged by religious products." (3)

(1) Weigle,LA.:The Training of Children in the Christian Family, p.456
(2) See Coe,G.A.:ASocial Theory of Rel. Ed., Ch. 15.
(3) Cope, H.F.:Religious Education in the Family, p. 42-44

A Definite Program

There can be no true worship in an irreligious family, but in the home with a truly religious motive worship will be the natural expression in a concrete form of the family ideals. The definite act of worship is needed in addition to the religious atmosphere because of its social value in raising all the members of the family together to a higher level, bringing them to feel the relation of their family to God's great family, making God real by recognizing His presence through all the day, and giving it tone.

"Few things will do more than family worship to unify and uplift the life of the family. It sweetens and controls tempers rasped by petty annoyances. It makes unselfishness natural and easy, dignifies drudgery, making it not only endurable but even joyous, frees the table conversation from bickering and trivialities, gives strength to meet the daily round of trials and temptations, irradiates all the family intercourse, and brings forth the fruits of the spirit which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, meekness, and self-control." (1) To recognize God in the daily worship in the home makes worship simple and natural everywhere, and makes it easier to live the Christian life at all times, under all conditions. Sunday worship is not enough, for it cannot take the place of daily worship, any more than putting coal in the furnace on Sunday will keep it warm all the week.

The custom of family worship has never been widespread, and now it is almost phenomenal. Even the saying of grace

(1) Tweedy,H.H.: Why Family Worship Should Be Maintained, International Journal of Rel. Ed., Dec., 1925.

at meals has never been a common custom. We cannot go back to the old-fashioned family altar if we would, for times have changed and the organization of family life in an industrialized society with its many concomitant problems would not permit. Many of the parents of to-day, who suffered under the long Scripture reading, and the father's sermon in prayer have vowed that <u>their</u> children shall never go through the torture of kneeling for hours (so it seemed) among the breakfast toast crumbs, but they have not tried to substitute anything more vital in its place. One minister's daughter confessed, "All I can remember about family worship is that I <u>hated</u> it, and was always glad if I was sick or had an excuse not to be there!" It is not such a program as that which is needed to-day to make religion vital in the home, but if there is a real desire to seek the best things somehow the difficult problems can be overcome. If to the father and mother of the family life means more than raiment they will find ways to minister to it. It is not easy, but it is vital.

The purpose of this paper is to try to recognize the difficulties involved in establishing a program of family worship, to suggest ways in which those difficulties may be met, and methods and materials which may prove helpful. In addition, a short daily program is suggested which may form a basis for planning further programs. It is highly desirable that the family work out its own service of worship to fit the needs and interests of its individual

members, for no two families are alike, and there is always danger of worship becoming mere formalism when a printed program is followed too closely.

PROBLEMS INVOLVED

The Time Element

In most homes to-day, especially in the city, the family is under a constant strain. Its time is not its own, for the school, office and shop set its hours, and the hurry and rush of the morning are not conducive to a worshipful attitude. In the evening there may be more time, although the multiplicity of engagements of the various members of the family cuts in here, and those who have worked all day are weary. It may be very difficult to find a time when all are free at the same hour, but usually where there is a will a way can be found, and with little children the habit can be so firmly established that the time will be reserved later almost automatically, if nothing is allowed to interfere when the custom is being established. With older children there must be real desire for a time together and voluntary cooperation to make it possible.

The automobile has created another problem, for many families now go off on long vacations, and it is very easy to let the practice of family worship go when not in the familiar home surroundings, and much harder to re-establish it later. The automobile also is apt to be substituted for church on Sunday, and while there is an advantage, no

doubt, in having the family together somewhere, it seems that perhaps there might be greater value if they were sitting together in church,--(certainly to the church!). The family that does not go to church is robbing itself as well as others.

Lack of Support from Public Opinion.

Popular custom does not aid the family worship period, and it may be hard for some parents to keep the custom alive and meaningful when their children reach the age in which public opinion is all-important. "Nobody else we know has family worship. It is old-fashioned," they may declare, but if it is a real need, and is really meeting the needs of the family, it will survive. Otherwise there is no reason why it should. When it fails it is because it is not related to life.

Preparation of Parents Inadequate.

Many parents feel the need of some form of worship in the home, but are at a loss to know how to start in, what Scripture to read, if any, how to answer the questions asked by their children, who have very different theological ideas in many cases, and particularly how to lead in prayer. To the average father the formal language of prayer is an obstacle. He finds it hard to feel natural using a language foreign to him. At first he may use a short printed prayer, then add a few words of his own, perhaps writing out his prayer for a time beforehand, and gradually this difficulty will not loom so large. The other problems will require study to overcome, for "the average parent is religiously

illiterate," and there is no easy way to solve this difficulty. There are some good books which will help, especially in getting hold of the new interpretation of the Bible,(1) and lists of readings are quite numerous(2). Parents' classes are doing a great deal of good, and the church should do much more than it has to aid the family in finding its true meaning and place.

Some churches are already realizing this and are finding many fine ways to be of service. A notable example is the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Pasadena, California.

There it has been found that parents are eager for help and will give time and effort in studying and carrying on home programs of worship when definite assistance and suggestions are given.

Danger of Formalism

It is very easy for the program to become stereotyped and formal, especially when following a printed form. The time should be an established habit, but there must be enough variation in the program to keep interest alive and glowing at all times. It must be a natural occasion, with no change in tone of voice or expression to make it seem unnatural. The trouble with the old family altar was that it was almost entirely adult-centered and the children had to listen because "it was good for them." In recent years psychology

(1) See Chamberlain: An Introduction to the Bible
Streibert, Muriel: Youth and the Bible
Badé, W.F.: The Old Testament in the Light of Today
Hodges: How to Know the Bible
Hunting: The Story of the Bible
(2) See bibliography

has made us see the importance of the child-centered program. In religion as in all else that concerns him the child has been placed in the midst. His problems of conduct and spontaneous questions and suggestions will be a very important part of the family worship, and should do much to prevent any danger of formalism or lack of interest.

Difference in Children's Ages.

Parents must realize that the religious and spiritual needs of their children are not all the same, and should study each child and know his particular needs and interests, so that the worship period may be of most help.

The smaller children should sit in the family group during the worship time, and will learn to bow their heads and say grace with the others, establishing the habit of participation naturally and simply. However, the program at this time will be planned particularly for the older members of the family, so the little child will have his special story and play-time with Mother at some other period of the day. The program for the 3, 4, and 5-year-old child has been beautifully worked out in the two volumes by Mary Wells Stagg and Samuel Boyd Stagg, Home Lessons in Religion, used first by parents in the First Methodist Church of Pasadena.

Summary

All of these are real problems, but it is true that time is found for the really important things; study can overcome the ignorance as to methods, etc.; and there is no excuse for dull or formal worship. The real trouble is the fact that by many the need of family worship is not felt

nor is its value appreciated. The members do not worship because they have no worship to express,"(1) and this is a difficulty far less simple than any of the others to overcome.

METHODS

Because no two families are alike it is clear that any suggestions as to methods will have to be very general, and each particular family group will find it necessary to take that which most nearly suits its own situation and adapt it to make it fit. Variation, inspiration, and adaptation are the key words for any program of worship.

Time of Worship Period

There is an advantage in the breakfast hour,--before, during, or after the meal, for then it is possible to set the mood for the day, but the danger of mere formalism arising from the need for haste in most families almost offsets this advantage. There must be leisure for questions and discussion, and for this reason many families have found the period just after dinner in the evening to be best. The main thing is that the family shall all be together and not too rushed.

Whatever the time selected, it should be kept almost instinctively, and no interruptions should be allowed to interfere, e.g., the telephone. If the father cannot be present the mother or older children should carry on the program. If there are guests they should be included just as naturally as in the meal itself, with no apologies. It

(1) Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, p. 331

is better to keep the family circle around the table unbroken usually, though some may prefer to gather around the piano, if music is part of their worship, as it may well be.

It is much better to have the service too short than too long. It should never be more than ten minutes, unless there is a voluntary desire to linger and talk over the day or the subject. From three to five minutes may be time enough, if there is a definite purpose in the act and all join in it.

In some families it will be possible to extend the worship into a children's hour just before bedtime, with longer stories and talks, etc. In this case there may be no formal program, but a song or poem after the story, and the bedtime prayers of parents and children together form a worship service in the truest sense.

Sunday should be the best and happiest day of all the week, when the family does things together. It should be truly God's day, one which serves to enrich life, when the beautiful and best are dominant. It should be free from worry and toil, and for this reason the value of the big Sunday dinner is greatly to be questioned. It is a day meant for "real mothering and fathering." The nicest things should be kept especially for Sunday, to help make it the best day of the week, e.g., games, stories, books, things to do, eat, wear, or see. (The "funny paper" is not included in this list.) Specific suggestions for things to do on Sunday may be found in Cope's Religious Education in the Family, pages 155 to 162; The American Home Series,

pamphlets, A Year of Good Sundays, and Sunday in the Home.

The family worship period should help prepare for the church service of worship, when all sit together. The sermon may be discussed at home, though discussion does not mean criticism. The family should strive to build up a vital relationship with the church and should co-operate in its program in every way possible. The church needs the home and the home the church.

Place and Posture

It has been suggested that the most natural place for the worship service is around the table, when the family is together in a close, unbroken circle, or the group may prefer to gather around the piano or by the fireplace. Some families have felt the need of a special room set aside just for worship, and have their own little private chapel. One woman uses the breakfast nook in her apartment for this purpose.

There is an advantage in meditating in the same spot, no doubt, for a particular atmosphere is created and centers about the place, but in most homes there is not room enough for such a thing, and then, too, there may be danger of creating the feeling that worship belongs just to that one particular spot.

It must not be separated from life, but should be natural at any time, in any place. Some of the deepest experiences of worship may come in the presence of a beautiful sunset, the reading of a poem, or hearing of beautiful music.

Preparation for the act creates the mood for prayer, and posture helps to create the mood as well as to express it,

but prayer should never depend on posture. Kneeling during the family worship period may help to create a prayerful attitude, or it may distract. It is not essential. The bowed head and closed eyes are enough. In some families hands are clasped together, or all take hold of hands, forming a more intimate circle, during the saying of grace.

Participation.

The programs should be planned to include the children in every way possible, though they need not be given entire charge. They should help plan the things all do together, and may offer suggestions at any time. Children's birthdays may be marked by allowing the child to choose the story and song, etc. Questions and comments should be encouraged always, for there is much that may not be understandable to a little child, which by long association suggests no difficulty to the adult mind. It may be that reading a verse around is not the best way to find the meaning of the devotional reading, and it may do more harm than good to ask a child to pray in public. Participation in any way must be natural, not forced. All may join in the Lord's Prayer, in the Psalms, etc., memorized together, and in the hymns, if they are used. If the children learn to take part when they are little it is not hard to keep up the habit, but there should be no self-consciousness about it. Religion should be such a natural part of life that it will not seem strange to connect it with all the day's events, at home and in the world outside. The

conversation at meal-time should correlate life and religion naturally. Worship should re-value ordinary events in terms of the finer, more ethical and spiritual,--not by tacking them on to the Bible reading and prayer, etc., but by finding them illustrated in Biblical and other literature, and forming the content of prayer. Religion is taking everyday, ordinary life seriously. There is no use to try to teach the child theology. His religion must grow out of his experience, and only then will words mean anything.

The family conversation sets the standards of value held by its members, very largely.

Expressional Activities

There is always danger that religion will become a passive thing,--mere "temple treading", but the home must be the laboratory in which religious attitudes and habits are formed through practice.

Home Tasks

Home tasks offer the best field for expression usually, although in many of our modern homes most of the work is done by machinery and the child has little chance to develop resourcefulness and initiative. There should be opportunities for service which develops the family consciousness. "The real problem is to find suitable activities for children which will be of service in the home, which will provide real companionship between parents and children during these tasks, and which will be truly educative in the sense of developing intelligence about the materials and the processes of everyday life. ...We must decide what results of the old training were essential to character and then analyze the activities

necessary to modern existence to see which of them can be made to produce those essentials." (1)

In most homes there are still some tasks which can be given to the children to do as their definite contribution to the welfare of the family, such as drying dishes, running errands, making beds, caring for the lawn, etc. In some families the children may be organized into committees which are responsible to the family as a whole for taking charge of these specific parts of the work. Through such tasks personal responsibility and mutual helpfulness are learned, often by applying directly the lesson of the day. Working together for the common good is one of the finest ways to develop comradeship and understanding between children and their parents, and it is worth a great deal of effort to bring this about. (2) As Dr. Soares has said, "There are great educational advantages in a small income," and those families which are handicapped with a large income will have to try much harder to find ways to accomplish the desired results.

Correlation

There should be correlation with the programs of church and school in as many ways as possible, in order that the child may see life as a unit, and religion as a part of all he does. Many fine projects can be worked out in the home. Missionary projects offer especially good opportunities for learning unselfishness and altruism. Red Cross and Near East Relief appeals suggest other lessons in giving and

(1) Mxcey, M.E. Parents and Their Children, pp.76-77
(2) See Coe, G.A.: A Social Theory of Religious Education, Ch. 15.

developing a social attitude. The life of the playground, contacts with children of other races in school, etc., afford opportunities for expressing religious attitudes also. More valuable lessons may be taught through crises that arise in everyday living than in any other way.

Dramatics.

In some homes dramatics may find a prominent place. Children love to act, and the Bible stories in which they take part as living characters may leave deeper impressions than any others. He who acts the part of the "Good Samaritan" should find it easier to remember to be kind in his daily life, but there is a danger, on the other hand, that the robbers in the play may not find their lives uplifted! Care must be taken in assigning parts that the unworthy character does not receive the greater glory.

Costumes are not necessary for home dramatics, or they may be very impromptu. The essential thing is to get the lesson over;--not to impress the audience, but to help the children who take part to be better boys and girls. Sunday afternoon should be a good time for acting Bible stories, for usually the evening hour will be too crowded.

Handwork.

Handwork, such as modeling, may make the stories more vivid for the little children. The older children may enjoy making note-books containing suggestions for the family worship period. Stories, verses, prayers, games, etc., may be written or pasted in, and pictures to illustrate the lessons either drawn or cut out. This may prove a valuable diversion for rainy Sunday afternoons.

A special subject may be selected for the note-book work, such as an illustrated Life of Christ, or the story of David Livingstone, or some other missionary or Bible hero.

Church membership and decisions for life work, of course, are among the ultimate forms of expression of the religious attitudes which are being formed daily.

MATERIALS

The Bible

It is generally agreed that the reading of some portion of the Bible should be a part of nearly every service of worship in the home, for at best the child gets only unrelated bits of it in Sunday school, usually, and it is his right to have a fuller knowledge of this interesting and important book. Our civilization is identified with Christianity, and it in turn rests on the Bible. Therefore, knowledge of its spirit and content are essential to the literary, ethical, social, political, and religious ideals and usages of to-day. It must be used as any other educational material, with intelligence and discrimination, not with blind reverence or as a magic charm. (1) It is not easy to use the Bible in this way, for it is not self-explanatory, and most parents do not have the time to study into its historical backgrounds, etc., as is necessary for a thorough understanding. Some still feel that it would be sacrilegious to do so.

Commentaries may be used if they are available, and it is suggested that Hasting's Bible Dictionary in one volume would help greatly with the history, geography, and interpretation of the Biblical material. For little children the

(1) See Dawson, G. E.: The Child and his Religion, Ch. 3

Bible story-book serves to simplify the language and explain the thought. There are some parts of the Old Testament which are not at all suitable for reading aloud, and it is always best to go over the material before it is used in the family group to see whether it is suitable, especially if the plan of reading the Bible straight through is followed.

There are those who declare that the Old Testament idea of God is immoral, and that "a person brought up strictly on Bible morality would be fitted only for Bible times and not at all adapted for our age. The Bible, therefore, may be used by the teacher of morals as one only out of many sources of moral insight and inspiration." (1) Some of these other materials will be mentioned later.

Although the child should know the Bible because it is an important part of his social and literary heritage its use in the worship program of the home should be largely inspirational, ministering to the development and direction of religious lives. Knowledge of the books of the Bible, its heroes, authors, dates, etc., is no assurance that the child's <u>life</u> will be changed or helped. Dr. Cope suggests (2) that the Bible should be used first by the parents, as they would like to have their children use it,--naturally, not as a task book, but joyfully, as an incentive to good behavior; as a book of life, to give <u>light</u> rather than as law, to help in problems of conduct; in worship, with helps of all kinds

(1) Spiller, Gustav: Moral Education, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, p. 217, vol. 5
(2) See Cope, H.F.: Rel. Ed. in the Family, Ch. 11

to make it real and vivid, instead of as a mystery or conundrum book. He also suggests that each child should have his own Bible and learn to use it, not as an ornament but as a guide. However, there are so many difficulties involved in the clear understanding of the Bible that unguided reading is of doubtful value. Questions are sure to arise, and it is best if they can be discussed in the family group. Often the parents will have to confess that they, too, are seeking more light, but they should be frank and never try to answer questions dogmatically. They should seek to know the fruits of the best scholarship and be open-minded at all times. Truth will bring the deepest values of the Bible to them as they search. The reading should always be in the spirit of Jesus and his teachings,--asking, for instance, "What would he say to the spirit of vengeance in some of the Psalms?" etc. In this way the devotional values will dominate the intellectual, as they should. A general theme may be chosen and followed for a period, if desired. Usually it will be well to have a central thought at least for the worship of the day. The family may choose together what they would like to think about, and selections to fit the theme.

Translations. To some the type and form of the Bible, with each verse numbered separately, are a hindrance to using it naturally, as any other book is used. The language is often obsolete and hard to understand, and for many people the modern translations--Moffatt's Old and New Testaments, and versions of the New Testament by Weymouth, Goodspeed,

Moulton and others are a great help.

Any or all of these may be used in the family worship service. It is important that the language in Scripture and prayer be understandable, and to the little child much of the wording of the King James version, for instance, is as foreign as Latin. The older children may enjoy comparing versions; finding their favorite passages in new wording may bring new meanings to them.

Passages for Worship Program. The selections from the Bible should be brief and varied, worshipful and interesting, and will be largely determined by the ages of the members of the group, for material varies in devotional value. Weigle and Tweedy suggest the following general classifications (1):

1. Children and adolescents need most the life and teachings of Jesus, which help them to know God as a loving Father, and Jesus as the Great Example for them to follow.

2. The Psalms are next in value,--"the world's classics in the literature of devotion." Many of them fit into the experience of the child and are easily understood.

3. The personal and practical parts of the Epistles, particularly the closing chapters in most, are next in value, then--

4. Parts of Deuteronomy and the prophets, especially Isaiah and Jeremiah and the shorter prophets.

5. Narratives of the Old and New Testaments "which best help one to realize the presence and goodness of God."

(1) Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, p. 304

The Wisdom and Apocalyptic literature are best left until later, although many of the Proverbs are usable for the older children. Job also has some very fine passages.

Some writers feel that the Scripture reading should be systematic and regular, and that it is better to read fairly large portions at one time, centered around certain persons or topics, as piece-meal reading is too apt to destroy the meaning. However, it is better to have the longer connected reading at some time other than the worship period,--say Sunday afternoon, or during the story-hour, for the period when the family is together should always be brief, with the emphasis on worship rather than on instruction. Reading aloud helps to bring out the full beauty and dramatic quality of the passage, and for this reason it may be wiser for an older person to read, lest the children laugh at the mistakes made by the younger readers, and spoil the desired effect.

Whatever material is used should help the child as he grows to adjust his life to society and to God.

The smaller children enjoy most stories about other children, home and nature. The stories of the baby Jesus, and little Moses, David and Joseph, are most popular. G. E. Dawson has made a study of the interests of children in the Bible(1), and finds that after eight years of age the interest in the New Testament declines rapidly and up to early adolescence both boys and girls prefer Old Testament stories, especially hero tales. During adolescence the interest in the Gospels

(1) Dawson, G.E.:The Child and His Religion, Ch. 3

rises rapidly with the development of altruistic interests, and at twenty years it is at the peak. All ages prefer the personal elements of the Bible overwhelmingly. Therefore, personal incident and biography are the best means of teaching the Bible. The younger children choose the stories of the child Jesus in preference to any others, and the older ones would also if they were allowed to see the human Jesus, without the mystery and theology with which he has been so often encrusted. "Jesus is naturally the most attractive character in the Bible for children of all ages, ...but religious teachers are usually so anxious to present Jesus to children as a divine person, and children's minds are so unable to grasp the mystical implications of this dogma that the human Jesus is taken away from them and the divine Jesus is made an intellectual abstraction. The result is that the child can love neither the one nor the other." (1)

In general there is not much interest in the miracles among older children, although to little children they present no intellectual difficulties, and appeal to their love for "wonder tales." Doctrine means very little at any age.

Whatever Scriptural passages are selected should arouse feeling, thinking, and conduct response, challenging loyalty to Jesus and his way of life, and then opportunities must be provided for training in Christian living. There are many collections of readings and books of devotions to help in

(1) Dawson, G.E.: The Child and His Religion, p. 82

selecting materials, but they should be chosen with care, for a large number of them were written by ministers or laymen with little or no knowledge of children's needs and interests, and are quite thoroughly adult-centered.

Memorizing Bible Passages. The family should memorize together many of the beautiful and powerful passages of the Bible, which will form a rich treasure greatly cherished in later years. However, the materials for memorization should be carefully selected, so that time will not be wasted on learning that which has no meaning for the child. There is plenty to learn which does have meaning and beauty and fits into the child's experience also. Materials should be those actually used in worship, those which prepare the child to share in and appreciate the worship of the church, and which ought to remain in memory as a permanent spiritual resource.

Passages are remembered longer than single verses because they have more associative connections for recall. Anything that is memorized should be worth keeping.

Probably the text of the American Revised version of the Bible is the best to follow in memorizing, though some still prefer the King James. Those materials which are used in the worship of the church, etc., should be learned in the form which will cause least confusion when repeating them in unison.

A great deal can be learned easily and naturally simply by reading and repeating together frequently..

Passages for memorizing are given in many of the pamphlets and books for family worship, but they should be selected by

each family according to its own needs, not according to any list of "passages which everyone should know." (1) As far as possible the family should co-operate with the Sunday school in its memory work.

The Bible Story-Book. For the younger children the Bible in story form is best, and, until they are old enough to read, the telling of Bible stories should be part of the worship program very often. Then they may have their own illustrated Bible story-books, such as Sherman and Kent's Children's Bible; O'Shea, Old World Wonder Stories; Hodges, The Garden of Eden, and When the King Came; Cragin, Old Testament Stories; Van Loon, Story of Our Bible; M. Stewart, Tell Me a True Story; The Book of Life series, etc.

Some of the books are in the language of the Bible and follow it closely, while others use the more familiar story form. It is not necessary to keep too close to the original form, for the beauty of it will be more appreciated later, and at this age the content is the important thing.

Reading and stories are very valuable methods of teaching, and the time necessary to prepare for the telling of a story is never wasted, but preparation is essential.

The value of Bible games is greatly to be questioned, for they may distort the child's conception of the Bible, making it a mystery book instead of a guide book.

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(1) For passages for memorizing, see
Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, pp. 311-313
Veach, R.M.: Bible Reading and Religious Training in the Home, pp. 15-18
MacClintock, W.D.: Religious Education, Aug. 1906, pp. 99-100
Cope, H.F.: The Parent and the Child, pp. 180-181
Book of Life, Vol. VIII.

Extra-Biblical Material

While it has been said that the reading of scripture should have a large place in the family worship program, there is a great deal of devotional literature which may be used to advantage, giving freshness to the period. It may be used in addition to a few verses from the Bible, or substituted for it entirely upon occasions, according to the preference of the family.

Poetry. There are many great poems and collections of poetry which are thoroughly usable, such as Whittier's Eternal Goodness, Tennyson's In Memoriam, Wordsworth's Happy Warrior, Martha Foote Crow's anthology, Christ in the Poetry of To-day, Caroline Hill's collection, The World's Great Religious Poetry, and Star Points and High Tide by Mrs. Waldo Richards, etc.

The same principles of selection hold good here as in using any other material. It must be inspirational and understandable,--at least the greater part. Little children may catch the beauty and inspiration of a great poem even though unable to grasp its full meaning.

Missionary and Hero Tales. Selections from lives of missionaries and hero tales may stimulate devotion and religious conduct. Everyland, a magazine for children, contains valuable materials. Stories of children in other lands are often suitable, and not hard to find in missionary publications, etc. (1) The Story of the Taj Mahal, etc., may be used.

(1) See Christian Education in the Family, Presby. Bd. of Christian Ed. List of stories of home and foreign missions, pp. 13-14.
Matthews, Basil: Missionary Heroes, etc.

Stories,--Nature, History, etc. Special occasions, historical anniversaries, etc., may be marked by stories about the event, but these also should have an inspirational character, being not merely stories. Much of the material in the Sunday school and Week Day Church School publications is thoroughly usable at any time, especially for the story-hour.

Current Events. Current events may well be a part of the program, but they should not be substituted for the devotional material, ordinarily. Usually they will enter more naturally into the table conversation, though any crisis or event of the day which needs consideration may form the chief content of the worship period.

A problem of conduct may suggest a particular story or passage of Scripture and the program should always be flexible enough to care for such occasions.

The Book of Life, Vol. VIII, contains an index of Bible stories treating particular problems of conduct, such as greed, anger, forgiveness, etc., and My Book House, by Olive B. Miller, also has such an index for stories from secular literature. However, the worship period should never be made an occasion for administering discipline, lest it lose its real meaning. Such stories should be used with great discrimination, always, and simply as means of strengthening motives of good conduct, etc.

Prayer

Children's Prayers. The children's prayers at bed-time are a real part of the family worship. In many families

where no other form is kept this is the last to be dropped. There is great danger of "saying prayers" becoming merely that, and the mother has the special privilege of guiding the child that his prayer life may become a very real part of his spiritual development. The mother first teaches the baby to pray by her example of praying at his bedside(1), then by praying with him alone and in the group. Prayer is learned by practice, and the habit should be formed as soon as the child can talk, even before he understands what it is all about(2). At first the mother may give him the form, taking care to make the meaning clear, and changing the form often, then she should let the child gradually add his own revisions. Prayer should never be forced or regarded as a duty. "We fail utterly if we do not in time develop within the child both the impulse and the power to approach God for himself in independent prayer." (3) The mother should talk with the child about the meaning of prayer, taking care to guard against misconceptions of the nature of prayer and its answers, God, etc. Prayer should never be regarded as magic or mere petition. The child can understand through his relation to his own father and mother and their love and care for his well-being. The parents have a precious opportunity here to make worship real. The father should share with the mother in all of it, ideally.

The value of the prayer at bedtime is increased by the opportunity to review the day together and put right ideas

(1) See Rumford, F.F.R.: The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child.
(2) See Hodges, Geo.: The Training of Children in Religion, pp. 135-138
(3) Weigle and Tweedy; Training the Devotional Life, p. 276

into the mind during sleep. For this reason the form of the prayer is especially important. The familiar "Now I lay me down to sleep" may have been all right when religion was primarily to fit men to die, but it needs revision for a living religion. It is better rendered:

"Thy love go with me all the night,
And wake me with the morning light."

Usually prose is better than rhyme for children's prayers, and less apt to become stereotyped. (1)

The kneeling posture is generally regarded as an aid to the worshipful attitude, and helps to keep the thoughts from wandering.

The older children should be given books which will help them in their private devotions, as Robert Cluett's Day by Day with the Master, etc.

Grace at Meals. Grace at meals should make the partaking of food more than a physical act, bringing God into the friendship of the home normally and naturally, in the giving of thanks. The form should be short, simple, and sincere, and changed often. It may be a grace sung by all together, or the children may take turns saying it. (2) Participation should never be forced, however. The silent "Quaker blessing" may be a helpful variation. The only essential is that grace shall never become stereotyped. Variation of form is the solution.

(1) See Beard, F: Prayers for Home, School and Sunday-school for forms of prayers suitable for different ages and occasions.
(2) Cope, H.F.:Rel.Ed. in the Family, forms of grace,p.134
Wells,A.R.: Grace before Meat, etc.

In the Family Group. There are many collections of beautiful prayers which may be helpful to those parents who feel their inability to express themselves before their children in their own words. These forms may be used "when the heart is full but wordless." ...some of them "may be the gathering up in a few sincere sentences of a whole lifetime of precious personal fellowship with God." (1) The Episcopal Book of Common Prayer is used in some families, (2) but in general the brief, informal prayer, coming from the heart, means far more to the family than the most beautifully phrased prayer read from a book. If the formal prayer is used it should always be in addition to the informal prayer, never as a substitute.

The content of the informal prayer should be adapted to the needs of the special group and its individual members. Professor Hartshorne says in praying for children, "Be short. Be simple. Be concrete. Be direct. Speak from the children's life, not from the adults' theology. Make the children feel that you are really talking with the Father and that they are saying to Him just what you are saying, and that He is trying to say something to them." (3) The children may be mentioned by name in the prayer frequently.

The wisdom of urging the children to pray in the family group individually must be decided by each family for itself. Some children will take part easily, while to others it may

(1) Porter, D.R.: The Enrichment of Prayer, p.6
(2) See bibliography for other collections of prayers.
(3) Religious Education, Oct. 1914, p. 446

be nothing less than torture. Care must be taken to avoid the danger of priggishness or "showing off."

Prayers in which the family joins as a unit are always helpful. The Lord's Prayer, while it may not have a great deal of significance to the eight-year-old, is always usable, but here, too, there is danger of formalism taking the meaning out of it. It should be repeated often, but not always.

The prayer is the one thing essential in any service of worship, for in it the family consciously and voluntarily seeks God's presence and guidance in its own particular group, and the worship period may omit any other feature if the prayer is sincere and still be all that it should be.

Some families find inspiration through keeping in touch with the larger world by using their denominational "Year Book of Missions" and remembering each day in their prayers the work in a particular field. This may be the basis of forming world fellowships and attitudes greatly to be desired, preventing the development of prejudices and anti-social attitudes.

Music.

Instrumental,--phonograph, radio. Music has much to do in forming the atmosphere of the home, and "may purify the life of the family and vitally affect the characters of the children." (1) The jazz records on the phonograph and the popular songs on the piano and radio, on the other hand, may have anything but a desirable effect on character. These

(1) Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, p. 289

instruments should be controlled and made to minister to the best life of the family. There are many families lacking in natural musical ability who find the phonograph an especial blessing. Children can learn to sing by hearing records of sacred and secular songs repeated frequently, and the great oratorios, The Hallelujah Chorus, Ave Maria, etc., are especially valuable and inspiring. (1). Sometimes a whole evening or Sunday afternoon may be given over to a program of music, and often a record may be part of the regular, briefer period of worship.

The radio is still so new its value is yet to be proved. The great difficulty is to control what is received, of course. Some churches have tried broadcasting a morning devotional period of hymns, Scripture, and a few remarks, particularly suitable for invalids, but there is the great disadvantage of the hearer's inability to participate in the service, which is undesirable from the point of view of the family with children, especially.

Hymns. The most effective music is that which is sung. "A home without song lacks one of the strongest bonds of family unity." (2) "In those periods when religion has flourished best, men have sung most." (3) Hymns are easily memorized and make lasting impressions, so it is important

(1) See Cope,H.F.:Religious Education in the Family, p. 105, for list of hymns on phonograph records for children.
(2) Cope,H.F. Rel. Ed. in the Family, p. 105
(3) Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, p. 289.

to use good ones, with sound theological concepts and the best English. We have no more right to lie in singing them in speaking, and there is no place for "pious fibs, melodiously chanted." (1)

The value of a hymn is judged by the character of its poetry, its music, and the adaptation of both to their use by children.

Weigle and Tweedy in "Training the Devotional Life" give the following requirements for hymns:

The poetry of hymns should possess literary merit, be rich in religious values, contain true conceptions of God and our relations to Him, contain wholesome imagery, be marked by healthy sentiment, and be true to life.

The music must have simple, flowing melody, with not too high a range (F flat), rich but not complicated harmony, rhythm free from all irreverent associations, and relation to the thought expressed in the words.

If the family is musical at all they will enjoy learning and singing many of the fine hymns together, and the words may be read or repeated separately, for variation, at times, although many of our best hymns are not usable in this way. It is often helpful to learn something about the hymn, why it was written, when, and by whom, and there are many good books which give this material now available. (2)

In some families it may be possible for the mother to awaken the children in the morning with a familiar hymn in

(1) Weigle and Tweedy: Training the Devotional Life, p. 293, and list of hymns to learn, p. 313-314.
(2) See bibliography.

which all join as they prepare to gather together, and with it the longer prayer instead of grace at breakfast may comprise the family worship, although a longer period again in the evening is to be desired if possible.

If music is part of the worship the family may gather around the piano to sing, or, if the voices are strong enough, without the accompaniment, while seated at the table. Music should not be used if it seems unnatural or unreal, for it is more apt to distract than to aid the spirit of worship. The Sunday afternoon "sing" may be the brightest spot of the whole week, in some families.

The hymns which are learned should be suited to the understanding of the children, in general, although some of the great hymns may be memorized before they are understood thoroughly, during the time when memory is at its best. Always they should be songs that are worth keeping.

"What a child prays he should practise, what he sings he should live." (1) Though the theology of some of the old favorites may not appeal to the child some parents may insist upon keeping alive certain hymns because of their beautiful associations. However, there are so many really fine ones which they might learn which have not the theological handicap, it would seem wiser to spend most of the time on some of them, such as Immortal Love Forever Full, Dear Lord and Father of Mankind, Lord of All Being Throned Afar, Come Thou Almighty King, the Christmas carols, etc. Such hymns may be used over and over in the worship service, with variations to help bring out their full meaning, such as reading and explaining or discussing a verse at a time.

(1) Weigle and Tweedy:Training the Devotional Life, p. 350.

Art

The pictures on the walls of a home tell much about its members. Well-chosen pictures hung in a child's room may have a great deal to do with shaping his ideals, and broadening his horizons. Every home should have some great picture with a religious theme, such as The Angelus, a Bible scene, a Madonna, or something similar.

Pictures may help greatly to make the Bible stories real to the child. The Book of Life contains some very fine copies of old paintings (some of which are of doubtful religious value), as well as photographs of modern Palestine, etc., and other pictures may be found in magazines, such as the National Geographic, and in the church-school publications, Perry pictures, etc. Illustrations for hymns may be used to good advantage. It is worth while to spend some time in studying the best pictures for they may prove of much religious value. Such a book as that by W. W. Smith, A Complete Handbook of Religious Pictures, should be helpful.

The stereoscope suggests possibilities, and there are sets of pictures on religious subjects available.

The value of moving pictures as an aid to worship has been much discussed. Such a picture as Ben Hur may be highly inspirational, and all the family may see it together, and discuss it afterwards at home, but too often the moving picture is anything but a help in fostering those values for which family worship stands.

The home sets the standards by which all else is judged. "The minds and senses that are preempted by good music, good pictures, and good literature are the only ones on which the false, the vulgar, and the wicked make no harmful impression."(1)

(1) Moxcey, M. E.: Parents and their Children, p. 36

PART III

PROGRAM

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PROGRAM

First Week. Theme: God's Goodness to Us.

Monday.

Read Psalms 136: 1-9 responsively, the children reading: "For his lovingkindness endureth forever."

Talk of the good things God gives us daily--flowers, rain, sun, food, etc.

Brief prayer by father or mother, closing with Lord's Prayer by all.

Tuesday.

Repeat Psalm 23 together (See the National Geographic for Dec., 1926, for illustrations.)

Sing Saviour Like a Shepherd Lead Us, or read it as a prayer song. (Miss Stickney has arranged a list of pictures to illustrate this song in Twenty-five Hymns with Art Picture Illustrations, p. 14, which may be obtained by planning ahead of time.)

Prayer by father, extemporaneous or read.

Wednesday.

Read Psalm 134 and tell the story of the Doxology, "Old Hundred." It was written to be sung with this psalm by Bishop Ken, who was imprisoned because he refused to sign a paper, the contents of which he did not believe. He wrote several hymns and this was the closing stanza of each. During the Civil War when Libby Prison was crowded with sick and dying soldiers one day a young minister was brought in

with the wounded, and the misery and filth made him so heartsick he turned his face to the wall. Suddenly he heard a young woman outside singing this song and the men began to join in one by one until in that miserable place all were singing. (1)

Let the children tell some of the particular things for which they praise God, and then sing this song together, closing with the Lord's Prayer by all.

Thursday.

Read Matt. 6: 25-34, "Consider the lilies," etc. Discuss together what it means to-day. Bring out questions.

Brief informal prayer by father.

Sing For the Beauty of the Earth.

Friday.

Read Psalms 104: 1-18, God's care over all His works.

Sing Fairest Lord Jesus. The author of this hymn was an unknown German, and the man who put it to the music of an old Silesian Folk Song also wrote the music for the song It Came upon a Midnight Clear. This song is very old, and may have been sung inthe twelfth century during the Children's Crusade to Jerusalem. (2)

Prayer, ending with Lord's Prayer together.

Saturday.

Repeat Psalm 121 together, or read it.

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(1) See Eggleston, M. .: Hymn Stories for Children, p. 3
(2) ibid., p. 3

Sing When Morning Gilds the Skies, or Now the Day is Over, depending on the time of day. If the latter, make it a prayer song, closing with a brief prayer by father or mother.

Sunday.

Sing first verse of Safely Through Another Week.

Read Psalm 100 or repeat together.

Discuss which of the Psalms read during the past week the children would like to learn this week, and read it over together.

Prayer and Lord's Prayer.

If the service is after dinner all may gather around the piano and sing as long as desired.

Second Week. Theme: God's Most Wonderful Gift.

Monday.

Repeat together the memory Psalm.

The most precious gift God ever gave to men was His own Son, Jesus. Read the story, Luke 2: 1-20, or let the children tell it.

Sing It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, first verse.

Prayer.

Tuesday.

When Jesus was on earth he was always helping people.

Let the children tell some of the things he did to help others, or read Mark 5:21-43, "Jesus Healing a Little Girl."

Sing I Think When I Read That Sweet Story of Old.
(Miss Stickney gives a list of pictures to use with this song in Twenty-five Hymns with Art Picture Illustrations,p.17)

Prayer and Lord's Prayer.

Wednesday.

Jesus taught his followers many things which they should do if they wanted to please the Heavenly Father.

Read Matt. 5: 38-48, "Love thine enemy,"etc. Draw out the children's questions and discussion on the passage.

Prayer, closing with

"Our Father, help us day by day
To live more nearly as we pray." (1)

Thursday.

Tell the story of Sir Launfal briefly. He was a brave knight who entertained great lords and ladies in his castle, but the poor were turned away. He wanted to find the secret of true happiness and decided to do one great thing to please Jesus, his Master. He was all ready to start on his journey and lay down to rest before leaving. He found himself riding out of his castle grounds saying to himself, "I want to do something for my Lord." He saw a poor beggar who asked him for help and scornfully tossed him a piece of gold, but the poor man wanted friendship and love, which gold could not buy. Sir Launfal traveled over the world for years, and spent all his money, but he was not happy and had not found anything great to do for his Master. He had only his armor and a crust of bread left when he finally

(1) Beard, F.: Prayers for Use in Home School and Sunday School,p.29

reached his castle again, and he found there were others there who would not let him in, although it was a cold winter day. Inside the castle was decorated with Christmas greens and there were warm fires burning. He turned away and there by the gate saw the same old beggar to whom he had been so unkind long before. He was sorry now and shared his crust with him, for it was all he had. Suddenly he found his heart was filled with the peace and joy he had been seeking all those years, and looking up he saw, not the beggar, but Christ himself. "Do not be afraid, Sir Launfal," he said. "Many weary years you have searched the world for one thing to do for me while here at your very gate are the poor and needy whom you could love and help."

Sir Launfal awoke, and finding it had all been a dream called his servant and said, "Hang up my armor, for I am not going to travel. Instead I shall help all the poor and needy who come to my gates." (1)

Sing O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee, as a prayer.

Prayer.

Friday.

Repeat the memory Psalm.

Let one of the children retell the story of Sir Launfal.

Discuss some particular thing they can do to please Jesus to-day, and later see that it is carried out.

Prayer, and "Our Father help us," etc.

(1) Adapted from Worth-While Stories for Every Day, by L.B.Evans, International Journal of Rel. Ed., March, 1926, p. 64.

Saturday.

Jesus tried to tell us who are the happiest people.

Read The Beatitudes, Matt. 5:1-10. Discuss the meaning carefully. (For the younger children Miss Cragin has developed five lessons on this passage in her Kindergarten Stories for the Sunday School and Home which are very suggestive. pp. 105-130.)

Prayer and Lord's Prayer.

Sunday.

Read the story of the Good Samaritan. Luke 10:25-37.

What do you think Jesus was trying to teach us in this story? Is there any connection with the story we had Thursday?

If there is time the children may dramatize the parable.

Sing O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee.

Lord's Prayer.

Third Week. Theme: Some Things Jesus Tried to Teach Us.

Monday.

Jesus tried to teach us many things that would make this a better world to live in if we would do them. One thing he said was, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Matt. 7:1. What do you think he meant?

He himself was so kind that he seemed to see some good in everyone. Tell the story of Zaccheus, the rich man who was despised by all his neighbors, Luke 19:1-10; or, if the children are not too young read or tell An Eastern Legend.

An Eastern Legend, by Norman Ault (1)

"Beside the sun-smit road, 'tis said,
A feast for flies, a dead dog lay;
And all who passed there, with averted head
Sped by it on their way.

Christ, passing with the Twelve, 'tis said,
Paused by the thing, which severally
They scoffed, or scorned, or cursed from tail to head,
Thus they, while silent he.

When all had ceased he raised his head:
'See ye no more than foulness? Nay!
Pearls are not whiter than its teeth,' 'tis said
He said, while silent they."

Sing Immortal Love, Forever Full as a prayer, first and last verses.

Brief prayer by father.

Tuesday.

Ask one of the children to repeat the "Golden Rule," Luke 6:31.

This is one of the things Jesus told us to do if we would live as God wants us to. Discuss more fully if desired, then tell the story of Laurence. (2)

(1) From Ault,N.: The Poets' Life of Christ, p. 134
(2) Adapted from Cragin, L.E.: Kindergarten Stories for Sunday School and Home, pp. 158-162

Laurence was a little boy who had no brothers or sisters and was often very lonely, though his mother and father did everything they could to make him happy. They went to live near some great mountains, which Laurence loved to climb sometimes with his father, and he made friends with the birds and squirrels in the woods near his home, but he often wished for another little boy to play with. One day he ran out to the pretty little lake near his home, and he was feeling so happy he shouted as he ran. Suddenly he thought he heard some one shouting back. He called out, "Hello!" and some one answered, "Hello!" in a faint, far-away voice. He was very happy then for he thought there must be another little boy there. He was standing on the edge of the lake, and on the other side there was a high mountain. He looked all around, but could see no one, so he called again, "Who are you?"

Instead of answering the voice said, "Who are you?" Laurence called back, "I'm Laurence Strong. What's your name?" And the voice said, "What's your name?" At this Laurence became angry, for he thought the boy was just mocking him, and he shouted, "You're a mean boy." The voice came back, "You're a mean boy." Laurence called, "I just hate you," and the voice answered, "I just hate you." Laurence ran home to his mother sobbing, and told her about the mean boy over by the lake who called him names. She smiled, for she guessed what he had heard, and said, "Go back again,

little son, and talk lovingly and see what your little friend will say." So Laurence went back and called, "Hello there!" "Hello there!" said the voice. "I love you," cried Laurence. "I love you," said the voice. "You're a good boy," Laurence called, and the voice answered, "You're a good boy." Laurence ran back and cried out, "Oh, Mama, he is a fine little fellow after all! He said he loved me and that I was a good boy." His mother answered, "I'm glad, dear, that this time he was so nice to you and I think you will always find that if you are kind and loving, others will be so to you."

Prayer and "Our Father, help us," etc.

Wednesday.

Read Matt. 7:24-27, "The Two Builders". Discuss its application to the lives of the children.

Brief prayer, and repeat or sing Dear Lord and Father of Mankind as a prayer.

Thursday.

Read Luke 15:2-7, "The Ninety and Nine," or tell the story.

Jesus was trying to teach us how dear each one of His children is to the Good Shepherd, no matter how far he may go astray from the right paths.

Repeat Psalm 23 together, or sing Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us.

Prayer.

Friday.

Jesus told another beautiful story to show God's love for His children. Read Luke 15: 11-32, "The Prodigal Son." Answer any questions to make the meaning clear.

Prayer and Lord's Prayer.

Saturday.

We have learned the Ten Commandments from the Old Testament, but what did Jesus say were the two Great Commandments? Mark 12: 28-34. Let one of the children look up the reference. How can we show our love for God and our neighbors? Discuss.

Prayer and "Our Father, help us," etc.

Sunday.

Ask the children to tell which story they liked best this week and why, and let one repeat it to the rest.

Sing Immortal Love, and others if there is time.

Brief prayer, and Lord's Prayer.

Fourth Week. Theme: Loyalty to Jesus.

Monday.

Jesus had been healing the sick bodies of many who came to him, but he wanted most to help people to see that there were more important things than their bodies which needed his care, so he tried in many ways to teach them how to live so that everyone would be happy and good, and thus they would be doing the will of our Father in heaven. Many people

loved him because he was so gentle and kind, but there were others who were afraid of him and wanted to put him to death. Some of the things he taught were different from the things they had learned, and they thought Jesus was wrong.

Read Mark 11: 1-10 or Matt. 21:1-17. This happened on the day we now call Palm Sunday. If possible play "The Palms" on the phonograph or piano, or sing Fairest Lord Jesus.

Prayer.

Tuesday.

While Jesus was in Jerusalem for the "Feast of the Passover", the great Jewish celebration, (refer briefly to its origin if it is unfamiliar to the children), he and his twelve disciples had supper together and Jesus taught them a beautiful lesson. Read John 13: 1-17. Discuss it as fully as necessary to bring out the significance of the lesson.

Sing O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee as a prayer.

Prayer.

Wednesday.

Jesus knew that his enemies would try to kill him and he took his three closest friends and went away to pray for strength to meet this great trial.

Read Mark 14: 32-42. Do you think his friends helped him much? What can we do to show our loyalty to Jesus today?

Prayer, Lord's Prayer.

Thursday.

Peter was probably the best friend Jesus had among the twelve, and yet when a hard test came Peter failed to meet it. Read Matt. 26: 31-35, 69-75. (Perhaps a story of a missionary or some other Christian hero could be used here to illustrate a follower who was loyal when the test came.)

Sing O Jesus, I Have Promised

Prayer.

Friday.

The story of the Crucifixion may be told very briefly for younger children, or if they are older read Matt.27:27-44 or 66. Do not dwell on this subject any longer than is necessary to make the children see that Jesus loved us more than himself and gave his life for us. He does not ask us to die for him but to live for him. What are some of the things he wants us to do?

Prayer.

Saturday.

The friends who had been with Jesus were very, very sad because they thought they would never see him again after his body had been put in the tomb, that Friday evening, but on Sunday something very wonderful happened which made their hearts glad again. Matt. 28: 1-10; 16-20. (It is in remembrance of that happy Easter day that we keep Sunday

instead of Saturday for our holy day.) It was just as Jesus had tried to tell his followers all the time, but they could not understand. He has said, "Lo, I am with you always," and though many years have passed since that time we know he is still with us and loves us.

Prayer and Immortal Love, first and last verses, or an Easter song, or play the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah, on the phonograph, if possible.

Sunday.

We have been thinking of Jesus' love for us and of how we can show our love for him by the way we live every day, here at home, at school, and anywhere we may be. There is a beautiful picture painted by the great English artist, Holman Hunt, called The Light of the World, (have it to look at if possible). It shows Jesus standing with a lighted lantern in his hand, knocking at a closed door, overgrown with vines. There is no latch on the door, so it must be opened from within. Mr. How has written a hymn to go with this picture, O Jesus, Thou Art Standing. Sing it as a prayer.

A brief prayer by the father in closing should sum up the thought, emphasizing loyalty in little things.

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D. J. M.

+ = materials which are recommended as especially valuable or suggestive for parents.

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